



**STATE OF MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
POLICY DIRECTIVE**

Policy No. DOC 4.5.22	Subject: OFFENDER HEALTH CARE CONTINUITY
Chapter 4: FACILITY/PROGRAM SERVICES	Page 1 of 3
Section 5: Health Care for Secure Facilities	Effective Date: Jan. 1, 1998
Signature: /s/ Bill Slaughter, Director	Revision Date: 04/18/06

I. POLICY

The Department of Corrections facility health unit will facilitate offender health care continuity from admission to discharge, including referral to community practitioners when indicated.

II. APPLICABILITY

The secure facilities that include Riverside and Pine Hills Youth Correctional Facilities, Montana State Prison, Montana Women's Prison, Treasure State Correctional Training Center, and the private and regional facilities contracted to the Department of Corrections.

III. REFERENCES

A. *National Commission on Correctional Health Care Standards, 2003*

IV. DEFINITIONS

Health Care Staff – Includes licensed health care providers and non-licensed health care staff (e.g., medical records staff, health care aides) responsible for offender health care administration and treatment.

Health Care Providers – Licensed health care providers (e.g., physicians, nurses, psychiatrists, dentists, and mental health practitioners), including contracted or fee-for-service providers, responsible for offender health care and treatment.

V. DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVES

A. Health Records

1. Health care staff will:

- a. obtain offender health records from previous providers when the information is clinically relevant to the treatment of recurrent, chronic, or exacerbated health conditions in accordance with medical information release procedures pursuant to *DOC 4.5.29, Confidentiality of Health Records and Information*;
- b. when possible, anticipate the need for prior health records and information so that delays or alterations in prescribed care and treatment are minimized;
- c. consult previous providers by telephone with regard to an offender's condition when prior health care and treatment records have not been obtained; and
- d. handle health records for offenders transferring to other correctional facilities or community corrections programs in accordance with *DOC 4.5.36, Health Transfer Records*.

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B. Offender Transports

1. Health care staff will ensure written instructions accompany any offender needing medication or medical care during transport between Department facilities or programs.

C. Release Plans

1. Health care providers will make follow-up arrangements or provide referrals to community providers for offenders with critical medical or mental health needs.

D Discharge Orders

1. Health care providers will write discharge orders when offenders are released and require prescription medication for the continuing treatment of chronic illness.
2. Offenders may receive up to a 30-day supply of medication.

E. Acute Illness Medications

1. When offenders are on acute illness medications at the time of release, health care providers will encourage them to take their medication cards to complete the course of therapy consistent with accepted medical practice.

VI. CLOSING

Questions concerning this policy should be directed to the Department medical director.